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By reappointing Farooq Awan as Member Finance at Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), the government has not only committed contempt of court but also violated the Pakistan Telecommunication (Reorganisation) Act, 1996.

The Lahore High Court (LHC) had declared Farooq Awan's posting as Member Finance PTA and then as Chairman PTA as illegal on 15th January, 2013 but the government

re-appointed him through a notification on March 1st.

According to Senior Lawyer Babar Sattar, the government has openly committed the contempt of court through Awan's reappointment.

He said the detailed judgment of the LHC issued on 28th February 2013 clearly states that Farooq Awan was

appointed in PTA on "some-one's desire" against the relevant Act. "The court declared that Awan had a personal conflict of interest as he was previously Chairman PTCL Board and had also been taking \$8000 for attending each board meeting," Sattar said adding that Farooq was disqualified by the court under

Section 3(4) of the Pakistan Telecommunication (Reorganization) Act, 1996.

He said the government had hastily changed rules after the LHC's short order and before the court's detailed decision in order to re-appoint Farooq in PTA.

However, Sattar said even the changed rules does not

provide legal protection to appointment of Farooq as the Pakistan Telecommunication (Reorganization) Act, 1996 under which PTA was constituted, calls for job security for the authority's chairman and member while in case of Farooq Awan, this condition is violated as he could be called back or transferred to

Government commits contempt of court by reappointing Awan in PTA

other government department at any time.

According to detailed verdict of the LHC, all regulatory bodies must remain independent from the government influence but posting of a civil servant like Farooq Awan in such bodies would obviously fail the purpose.

It is worth mentioning here that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has also declared Farooq Awan's reappointment in PTA as violation of its order that bans new appointments by the government ahead of elections.